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The Great Kabuki

The Great Kabuki, or Akihisa Mera, is a renowned figure in the world of professional wrestling, known for his iconic character that combined elements of traditional Japanese theater with the flamboyant world of wrestling. Born on September 8, 1948, in Nobeoka, Japan, Mera began his wrestling career at the tender age of 16 and quickly made a name for himself with his unique style and presence in the ring. His persona, The Great Kabuki, emerged in the 1980s and became famous for the use of Asian mist—a tactic where he would spray a colored mist into his opponents' faces, disorienting them and gaining an upper hand in matches. This act of

subterfuge became his signature move and has been emulated by wrestlers around the world ever since.

Mera's journey to America in the 1970s marked the beginning of The Great Kabuki's rise to fame. He wrestled across the United States and Canada, captivating audiences with his mysterious aura and martial arts skills, including the use of nunchaku before matches. His character was said to have been scarred in a bed of hot coals during a match with Tiger Jeet Singh in Singapore, adding to the mystique of his painted face and long, messy hair that obscured his features. Managed by Gary Hart, Kabuki's character was a blend of the exotic and

the fearsome, often portrayed as a heel, or villain, in wrestling storylines.

The Great Kabuki's influence extended beyond his own performances. At times, due to high demand, the character was also portrayed by Kazuharu Sonoda, Mera's former tag team partner, who would appear as Kabuki in certain promotions. This dual portrayal added to the enigmatic nature of the character and allowed The Great Kabuki's presence to be felt in multiple locations simultaneously.

Beyond the ring, The Great Kabuki's legacy is evident in the way he influenced the portrayal of Asian characters in wrestling, paving the way for

future stars like The Great Muta. His use of the poison mist, his theatrical entrance, and his martial arts demonstrations set a new standard for performance in professional wrestling, blending athleticism with performance art in a way that had never been seen before.

The Great Kabuki retired from wrestling in 2018, leaving behind a legacy that transformed the industry. His contributions to the sport have been recognized by fans and wrestlers alike, and his character remains a symbol of innovation and cultural fusion in professional wrestling.